

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are pending in the present application. By this action, claims 1, 6-8, 10, 12, and 17 were amended. Reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

I. Telephone Interview

The Examiner is thanked for the courtesy of a telephone interview and for her suggestions in preparing amendments to the claims that would contain immediately allowable subject matter. It is understood from the discussion that the amendments presented here make the claims allowable.

II. 35 U.S.C. § 101: Claim 17

Claim 17 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as being directed towards non-statutory subject matter. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

This claim has now been amended to recite that the steps of the method are "computer-implemented". This rejection is now overcome.

III. 35 U.S.C. § 102, Anticipation: Claims 1-4, 6-10 and 12-15

The examiner has rejected claims 1-4, 6-10 and 12-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Barber et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,579,471) (hereinafter "Barber") in view of Jain et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,913,205) (hereinafter "Jain"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 1, 6, 7, and 12 have now been amended to include additional features from claim 17 that have been indicated to include allowable subject matter. Therefore these claims are now allowable. Since claims 2-4, 8-10, and 13-15 each depend from one of claims 1, 7, or 12, these claims also contain the allowable subject matter of their independent claims.

Therefore, the rejection of claims 1-4, 6-10 and 12-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) has been overcome.

IV. 35 U.S.C. § 103, Obviousness: Claims 5, 11 and 16

Claims 5, 11 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Barber in view of Jain and further in view of Czerwinski et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,188,405) (hereinafter "Czerwinski"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

These claims are all dependent on the claims discussed in the 102 rejection above. Since the independent claims have now been amended to include allowable subject matter, these dependent claims also contain the allowable subject matter. Therefore, the rejection of claims 5, 11 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) has been overcome.

V. 35 U.S.C. § 103, Obviousness: Claim 17

Claim 17 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Garg et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,567,846) (hereinafter "Garg") in view of Bloomfield et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,461,710) (hereinafter "Bloomfield") and Lautzenheiser et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,574,621) (hereinafter "Lautzenheiser"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner indicated in the telephone interview after the final rejection that this rejection was being withdrawn and that claim 17 would be allowed once the 101 rejection was removed. With the amendments to remove the 101 rejection, it is understood that claim 17 is now allowable.

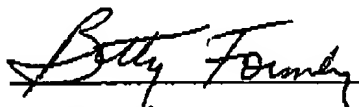
VI. Conclusion

According to the telephone interview, all claims have now been amended to place them in condition for allowance. The Examiner is thanked for her help in this matter.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number if in the opinion of the Examiner such a telephone conference would expedite or aid the prosecution and examination of this application.

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Respectfully submitted,



Betty Formby
Reg. No. 36,536
Yee & Associates, P.C.
P.O. Box 802333
Dallas, TX 75380
(972) 385-8777
Agent for Applicants